



Defence Intelligence Report

The Evolution of the IED Threat in Iraq



2 December 2004

Warning: This document contains codeword material

HUB 3
R0014302
12 JUL 2010
Ships 333

UK TOP SECRET UK EYES ONLY

Executive Summary

- Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) remain the main killer of coalition forces (CF). The threat from IEDs continues to evolve not only quantitatively, but also qualitatively, with new or modified device types and Modus Operandi (MO). (S)
- The rise in IED attacks in 2004 indicates that, despite CF tactical successes, the security situation has not improved overall and individual terror groups are making significant progress in terms of ability to mount successful IED attacks, probably through improved C2, logistics, recruiting and external assistance. (S)
- Improvement in IED technology has been most significant in Shia areas since May 04, where technical progress has been made that we assess could only have been achieved through focussed external assistance. We assess that this may be due to an influx of Lebanese Hizballah technology under Iranian sponsorship. (S)
- We continue to assess that there is no overall unified C2 to the insurgency but we are continuing to see the migration of IED technology and MO across regions. Migration remains primarily from North to South for Sunni insurgents and South to North for Shia insurgents, but is becoming more complex. This is a reflection of the number of different groups involved in the insurgency and their overlapping motivations and contacts. (S)
- The level of significant Vehicle Borne IED (VBIED) attacks has not diminished and remains at between 30 to 50 per month over the last four months. (S)
- Increasing complexity of Radio-Controlled IEDs (RCIED) during Mar - Sep 04 indicates an influx of new bombmaking skills, which are generally an improvement on the skills of former Iraqi Intelligence Service (IIS) bombmakers. (S)
- Increasing use of Command Wire IEDs (CWIED), especially in Multi-National Division (South East) (MND(SE)), seems to indicate an awareness of CF Electronic Counter Measures (ECM) and intent to mitigate its effectiveness. (S)
- Improvements in IED design and MO are likely to have increased the lethality of individual attacks but this may not be fully apparent due to lack of statistics and due to improvements in force protection and CF procedures masking the effect. This will be more of a problem for newer Iraqi forces. (S)
- We assess that the IED threat in Iraq is likely to continue to develop to resemble that of other Middle East countries, such as Israel, with the further import of IED technology and MO from Palestinian, Lebanese and AQ associated groups. (S)